For the time being we shall have to put up with a certain amount of injury to the forests. Food is more important now and there will be no subjects in the State if the required food cannot be found. The honourable member has raised the question of cultivation of certain grass lands. This question has also engaged the attention of the department. On certain representations received from the general public areas have been inspected and Government have generally approved of the cultivation of certain grass lands in the upper hilly regions above the belt of useful forests on condition that the land is terraced so as to prevent erosion. This matter is being investigated and the Government have ordered that the Director of Agriculture, the Conservator of Forests and the Chief Engineer should inspect these areas and prepare a proper scheme so as to enable people to cultivate them permanently without endangering the surface soil. Now-a-days in those areas almost every year the grass is being set fire to. After the fire what happens is that the very first rain carries down all the ashes and the burnt humus and the surface soil. This has been happening year after year with the result that in several places out crops of rock have exhibited themselves. Such areas are not particularly suited for the growth of valuable forest trees. In order to prevent the erosion which is now going on it is considered desirable that such land should be brought under cultivation but should be protected against erosion by proper bunding. This scheme is being considered and it is hoped that before long a proper scheme will be put into operation by Government.

The question that a sum of Rs. 11,73,320 be granted under Demand IV—Forest—was then put and carried.

The grant was made.

DEMAND V—REGISTRATION.

Mr. K. Madhava Kurup : Sir, I move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 3,30,353 under Demand V—Registration.

Mr. N. Krishna Aiyar : Sir, I support the demand with the satisfaction that the administration of the Department at present is very efficient. A number of useful circulars are being issued. But it is unfortunate that some Sub-Registrars misinterpret these circulars perhaps unintentionlly. For instance, there is a circular that the entire contents of a document must be in Malayalam. I know an instance where a document was returned without being registered on the ground that the endorsement by the vendor on the back of the paper contained the date and the number of the document in English figures. The poor man had to take back the document and had to get corrected the number and date into Malayalam. I cannot believe that the circular will be so unreasonable. If it is so it is high time that it is corrected.

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Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi: Is that gentleman still in service?

Mr. N. Krishna Aiyar: Yes.

Then there are several methods of corruption. I could not fancy a few years ago that such an inoffensive officer like the Sub-Registrar would be so corrupt. The collection of the registration fee in Bh. rupees is a common instance in several Sub-Registry Offices. I do not emphasise it as a very serious piece of corruption, but all the same the accumulated reserves for a month would amount to a considerable figure.

Another form is where the Sub-Registrars attempt to study the physiognomy of the executants. I know a certain instance where a certain executant before a Sub-Registrar was considered to be below 18 years of age and the registry was refused. But the next day some how the same document was registered by another Sub-Registrar with the satisfaction that the evolution had been very quick. I know there may be exceptional circumstances. But the instance I quoted was not exceptional.

Mr. V. Sankara Menon: May I ask the member whether he has brought that instance to the notice of the head of the Department?

Mr. N. Krishna Aiyar: I believe that the head of the Department is keen enough to know that there are some Sub-Registrars of that nature.

Again there are instances where the Sub-Registrars go to the offices late and advance the clock by one hour perhaps in anticipation of the Government of India Rule for advancing clocks for September. All documents presented within an hour of the Sub-Registrar's coming into the office will be returned saying that it is too late.

I am also aware that in some cases the Sub-Registrars collect a new fee not contemplated in the Regulation known as comparing fee (ഒത്തുനോക്കു ഫീസ്). When a sale deed is presented with the pokkuvaravu form the clerks have to compare it with the original to see whether it is correct. For this purpose they collect a fee known as comparing fee. I am not aware that the Department has enjoined this. But the executant has to pay it along with the presentation of the original document, otherwise he will have to wait for several hours.

Another source of leakage in the department is in the matter of encumbrance certificates. These are unduly delayed and the parties are put to unnecessary and additional expenditure. The parties are encouraged to go through indirect methods if they want the certificate speedily.

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I know that these things might be known to the head of the department and I think he is trying to eliminate these. All the same I am bringing these to the notice of the head of the department and Government to show that such difficulties do exist and require speedier remedies to erradicate them completely.

Mr. K. Madhava Kurup : Sir, the law requires that every document should be written in Malayalam and that only Malayalam characters should be used. Formerly these documents were written only in Malayalam. I believe that the House will agree with me when I say that it is advantageous to have the documents only in Malayalam and not in any other character.

The honourable member referred to corruption prevailing among the Sub-Registrars and also to comparing fees. Thanks to the currency policy of the Government, half rupee coins are available in large quantities. I find now that half rupee coins are ordinarily given as registration fees. The sirkar one rupee is only a myth. About five or six months ago I had passed a notice, which has been printed and affixed in all offices, to the effect that parties need not pay anything more than what is necessary under the law. This year for example during the first ten months about three lakhs of documents have been registered and at the rate of two witnesses for a document about 6 lakhs of people would have appeared before the registry offices. It will be surprising to know that during this year there were only 18 complaints. I do not think there is any other department in which so few complaints have been received. Every one of those petitions has been enquired into by the Director and action taken.

Mention was made of the Sub-Registrars advancing the clock. These are complaints which are being made and I know why they are made this year particularly. Ordinarily a Sub-Registrar can accept about 30 or 35 documents. When a party comes late and the Sub-Registrar does not take his documents he makes all sorts of complaints.

Mr. T. Krishna Pillai : May I know whether the honourable member knows that the Sub-Registrars can accept fresh documents up to 4 P. M. ?

Mr. K. Madhava Kurup : Yes, they can. They should receive all the documents presented before 4 p. m. In fact the aim of the Department is to help the public.

The question that a sum of Rs. 3,30,353 be granted under Demand V—Registration, was then put and carried.

The grant was made.

DEMAND VI—RAILWAYS.

Mr. A. Lakshminarayana Ayyar : Sir, I beg to move for a grant of Rs. 15,800 under Demand VI—Railways.

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